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A Pathfinder in American History. By W. F. GORDY and W. I. TWITCHELL. Part I. Lee & Shepard: Boston. pp. 102.

This book is intended primarily as a teachers' guide in giving a general survey of the literature of American history. It tells what that literature is, what it costs, and where it can be found. It has been brought into being as a result of the remarkable growth of interest during the past ten years in American history. The subject of American history now has a place in the curricula of all of our high schools and academies, but it is only within a comparatively recent time that any systematic effort has been made to utilize in the intermediate and lower grammar grades the multitude of good books of poetry, fiction, and biography connected with the history of our country, many of which would be keenly enjoyed by children from ten to twelve years of age.

The Pathfinder is an attempt at a systematic presentation of the best method of using this literature in the primary, intermediate, and lower grammar grades of our public schools, so as not only to cultivate in the American youth a taste for American history, but to instill into his mind a love for his country and its institutions. It is based upon the principle, which we believe to be a correct one, that every lesson should be a language lesson. American history is combined with language, reading, literature, and geography, not by making those studies auxiliary to it, but with a positive gain to each.

It is not a book for pupils, but for teachers, and in addition to a list of reference books on American history, it contains a special list of books for first, second and third years; a course of supplementary reading; a list of important anniversaries, with some sample anniversary exercises; outline topics for the various years; suggestions to teachers on the method of grouping subjects; and a glimpse at the poetry, fiction, and biography bearing upon the subject of American history.

The list of reference books is by no means exhaustive; indeed, many books are omitted which should be found in such a list. No mention is made of such works as Justin Winsor's "Narrative and Critical History," Hildreth's or Henry Adams' "History of the United States," or J. T. Short's "The North American of Antiquity." The authors mention only four of the "American Statesmen Series," and some of those mentioned are not well adapted to the class of pupils or the instruction contemplated by the general scope of the book, notably VonHolst's "Life of Calhoun" which contains but little of the biographical element.

The book is, however, a suggestive one and from a pedagogic point of view has many real merits. From the point of view of historic value, a chief defect is that it contains no discussion of the relative authenticity and value of the various books it mentions. The number of school books in American history with

which the public has been flooded within the last few years is very large. Some of these are deservedly popular, not only because they are written in an entertaining and popular style, but also for the further reason that they are the work of genuine scholarship, based upon careful and conscientious research. But by far the larger number of our school histories are the work of unscholarly and careless compilers who have copied the errors of the authors from whom they have drawn. Some discussion of the different authors mentioned, especially in the field of school text-books, would be a genuine contribution to the value of the book, and would fill a want long felt by the teachers of history in our public schools.

Albert A. Bird.

The Beginner's American History. By D. H. MONTGOMERY. Ginn & Co.: Boston. pp. 234.

The little book by Mr. Montgomery is exactly what its title implies, a "Beginner's American History." It is not an abridgment of the large and deservedly popular work by the same author, "The Leading Facts of American History." Unlike many other authors, Mr. Montgomery does not attempt to cover the whole field of American history by enumerating a long list of dry details, which would not only have no attraction, but would be positively distasteful to the average ten year old school boy.

The book is largely biographical in its plan, and its chief merit is due to the fact that the author has displayed rare good judgment in the selection and correlation of the material used. In the main, only anecdotes of undoubted authenticity have been used, although some of questionable authority have crept in, as for example the story of Pocahontus saving the life of Captain John Smith.

Few persons can write a history over which any large percentage of school children will become enthusiastic. But Mr. Montgomery undoubtedly understands boys, and what is of interest to them. He has told the story of the lives of some of the chief makers of America in a wonderfully attractive and simple style. The field from which to select material is so wide, and the important characters in American history so numerous, that there is a wide range for the exercise of individual judgment in determining what should be included in such a book. Some of us, perhaps, would have made a selection different from that made by the author. But on the whole he has displayed great tact and we predict that with younger students this book will become even more popular than his *Leading Facts* has already become with more advanced students.

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